

Fishtown Kensington Area Business Improvement Board Meeting

Minutes April 17, 2025

Meeting called to order at 10:02am

Attendees – Janay Green, Lisa Mazzola, Ravi Bayanker, Paul Kimport, Henry Siebert, Greg Root, Jeannine Cook, Roland Kassis, Michelle Claffey, Marc Collazzo, Scott Nistico, Randi Sherwood, Max Thalheimer, Bianca DiPietro, Josh Olivo, and Lee Stoetzel.

March 2025 Board Meeting Minutes approved – Lisa motioned for approval and Lee second.

1. Budget and Financial Report

a). Balance (as of 4/14/2025): \$148,468.27.

b). BID Assessment Collections to Date (1/1/2025 to 4/14/2025): \$272,700.12.

Live Nation paid \$50,000.00 for the first and second quarters of its 2025 CDC Tax Credit obligation.

Total Collections YTD:

BID Assessment Revenue 2020: 3,718.20

BID Assessment Revenue 2021: 4,407.76

BID Assessment Revenue 2022: 5,608.64

BID Assessment Revenue 2023: 9,737.28

BID Assessment Revenue 2024: 28,029.92

BID Assessment Revenue 2025: 248,914.12

Credit for Exemptions -27,715.80

Total BID Assessment Revenue 272,700.12

Late Billing Notice Mailings: End of April, 2025

Live Nation paid 1st and 2nd Quarter tax. Marc sent personal reminders to larger stakeholders.

\$308,000 collected this time last year (2024)

\$248,914 collected in 2025 (noted that fewer outstanding payments for previous years) Making the collections year over year similar.

Lisa motioned to approve the financial Report and Matt second.

Marc opening remarks

- Filed Philadelphia Activities Grant – will be used for the York Round-about for security cameras and beautification. Expecting to hear in July.
- Working on several Derby concepts promoting East Kensington – Justin & Steph Erwin working on budget and plans. Budget will be based on sponsorships, Corridor Enhancement Grant, and PTSSD. Tentative date is Sat, Oct 25, 2025.
- Corridor manager – Scott Nistico resigned and Max Thalheimer's position as Business Outreach Manager has been expanded. Scott will continue to head up the ambassadors and Fishtown Corps.

ISA Vision Pain II Presented

Martha Street Activation & gateway to use the space for gathering and pedestrian traffic, and preserve history.

Questions

HOW CAN WE CREATE A FESTIVAL STREET?

HOW CAN WE DISCOURAGE CARS, ENCOURAGE PEDESTRIANS?

HOW CAN WE GET THE ATTENTION OF PEOPLE ON FRANKFORD AVE?

HOW CAN WE ENCOURAGE SPONTANEOUS & FLEXIBLE USE OF SPACE?

Identifying what is already there – Old smoke tower, pink pig, PVC signs, and flow of traffic.

New gateway proposal is more traditional and playful, using half circles, more industrial, and bent beams. Simple clean gates can be moveable to sidewalk and out of the way when not in use. Gates are 3.5' high to prevent traffic. Height to top is 14' making it viable for trucks and deliveries. Moved back from corner to allow for wide vehicles to turn onto the street.

Greg – EKNA Likes the new design - construction, foundation, and the ability to roll gates back. Also likes the color and slender beams. Requested that lighting be considered and to show different angles before next meeting and designs are distributed. Wanted to be clear that neighborhood supports this and is excited about this happening. Super positive that we are this far along on the project.

Josh – Full width is important and moveable gates. Modern design still in question, maybe see something more traditional. Would like further discussion about the design.

ISA – the curved archways were picked up from Picnic. Questioned what constitutes traditional.

Josh – Trusses of greater width or thicker I-beams.

Marc – warned that the cost of those may be cost prohibitive. Recommends meeting with the stakeholders in the near future to come to a final design.

Matt – questioned if Martha is often closed to traffic for events?

Marc – long term may consider closing the street to cars. Plan is all funded currently by grants. Mentioned that Center City District closes random streets weekly. When Martha has been closed in the past it is a natural spot for pedestrians to gather.

Josh – Historically Martha was a private street with old brewery complex. This would help delineate it from the rest of the grid.

Lisa – BID is here to help the businesses and the grant is to build it so that people will come and use it differently and even take pictures in front of the structure.

Bianca – asked if ISA could present more than one option one modern and the other traditional.

Frankford and York

HOW CAN THE ROUNDABOUT BECOME A LANDMARK FOR FISHTOWN?

HOW CAN WE PROMOTE WAYFINDING TO MARTHA GATEWAY, FISHTOWN AND BEYOND?

HOW CAN WE MAKE FRANKFORD FEEL CONTINUOUS?

HOW CAN WE ACTIVATE SOME OF THE UNDER-USED EDGES?

Steel posts can be cleaned and a canvas for local artists. Fun destination, seasonal décor, and an advantage for businesses in that area.

Additional lighting or design up high, something light and airy to create a natural gathering spot at triangle with trees and seating.

Michelle – asked if anyone had reached out to FNA, because they have plans to plant wild flowers/garden and is currently looking into budget and funding.

Greg- likes the lighting & vegetation and said to consider the greenery in the winter.

Justin – connect FNA and EKNA in the planning.

Lee Street Alley

HOW CAN SUBTLE DESIGN HAVE A BIG IMPACT?

HOW CAN WE MAKE THE STREET MORE INVITING?

HOW CAN WE IMPROVE THE CURB APPEAL OF LEE ST BUSINESSES?

Mural on the building to match others in the area. Add simple street paint. Lighting challenges were resolved by adding LED lighting onto the buildings.

Matt – he would like to see more activations further down the street.

Lisa – had to leave and voted yes on both Martha and Lee Street if a vote was to be taken.

Caroline – suggested recreating the old welcome to fishtown cat mural that was removed.

Janay – asked how many businesses are there and is this activation necessary.

Marc – two new businesses – chosen for creating more pedestrian space in the heart of the district. Create more walkable spaces.

Girard Avenue & Frankford Avenue

HOW CAN WE BRING E GIRARD TO A HUMAN SCALE?

HOW CAN WE MAKE CROSSING THE STREET A BETTER AND SAFER EXPERIENCE?

HOW CAN WE ENCOURAGE SMALL BUSINESSES TO INTERACT WITH THE STREET?

HOW CAN WE CREATE INFRASTRUCTURE THAT CAN GROW WITH BUSINESSES?

Portals at intersections and crosswalks presented for trolley stops to provide safety for crossing the street. Natural stopping points.

At corners smaller offshoots of design with bike racks, planters, and seating.

Marc – requested larger or wider beams on trolley stops. Maybe add some greenery.

ISA – colors are open to discussion.

Jeannine – concerned about anything that people can climb on, so maybe round the edges. Possibly consider painting the crosswalks.

Michelle – FNA is interested in painting the cross walks, but has yet to select the crosswalks. Noted that anything with a flat surface like benches attract skateboarders.

Opening Remarks from Janay –thanked everyone who was able to attend our in person meeting. Discussed with Marc for the “East Side” concept that she and Jeannine have for businesses on Girard.

Marc -**Trash & Dumping** – sent out a letter to the businesses in problem areas that said don’t put your trash out early. Sweeps will be issuing violations. Spoke with Crystal Jacobs Shipman about 2 day collections – requested that will be continuing pilot program – Fishtown would be next. We have a enforcement “Sweep” Officer.

Talked about using only required containers for trash. City will provide one and then additional ones can be purchased. Doesn't appear in the ordinance but we are on the list to start this program.

JJ Mallons – construction of Rittenhouse Deli and Juice Bar – signage on building.

Bianca – asked if it was still a requirement that commercial businesses provide a trash can for customers outside their business. La Columbe and Van Lewens don't have them currently.

Marc – TCB funding – met with Dennis Murphy of Commerce explained the magnitude of the issue and the expense of private trash collection from RWA, Ambassadors and Fishtown Corps.

Councilmember Mark Squilla weighed in and suggested that Commerce continue with the grant for Fishtown District.

Retail Weekend – discussed the upcoming Spring Stroll, Roll and Shop - trolley tour, retail specials, entertainment at the trolley stops with musicians, performers, etc. Goal is to bring new customers to the district while keeping it as simple as possible for the stores to participate. This is something we felt would be completely ours and would be repeated a few times throughout the year.

Derby Update- Marc stated that the Fishtown District would be applying for a grant to host the Derby in the fall this year. We have asked Steph Erwin & EKNA to coordinate. Date chosen is tentatively Sat, Oct 25. There will be no outside vendors and street closures and footprint will be smaller. Circle around Martha and York. Expecting the grant notification by June.

Marc – presented Ambassador stats and said as weather warms we will adjust personnel.

Max – Business Outreach Manger – happy to stop into businesses and play a larger role. Meeting people where they are is a priority and to stay on top of businesses as they are busy with their own work. Taking time to update the "rolodex" with contact information. Making everyone aware of the BID and what we do.

Randi – noted that the website is being worked on and will present ideas for next meeting.

Marc – Spend approved for connector project to complete the plaza portion and letter seating.

Front & Girard activation will be completed by June.

Caroline – Fishtown Connect – upcoming meetings at Art Gallery Happy Common Wheel 5:30pm and a Pickleball friendly meeting with sponsors – date and time to be announced.

Adjourn

Janay made a motion

Caroline second

All approved